HUC’s 26th Annual Tribute Dinner

Historic collaboration between Catholics and Jews to be celebrated; Fifth Third’s Kabat to be honored

The Cincinnati Associates of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR) are holding their 26th Annual Tribute Dinner on Sunday, Nov. 23, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel.

The Tribute Dinner will celebrate an historic collaboration between Xavier University, a Catholic Jesuit University, and the Hebrew Union College, a Jewish rabbinic seminary as well as honor Kevin T. Kabat, president, CEO and chairman of the board of Fifth Third Bancorp.

For the first time in history a Catholic Jesuit university, Xavier University, and a Jewish rabbinic seminary, HUC-JIR, will be combining their respective interfaith and academic missions and values.

“\text{This unique collaboration symbolizes the transformational visions and shared values of the institutions’ two presidents, Father Michael Graham and Rabbi David Ellenson, who believe that it can serve as a beacon to all persons in Cincinnati and beyond to how these religious traditions can and do promote the life-affirming qualities inherent in each,}” explained Sheri Sable, HUC’s Cincinnati director of Public Affairs and Development.

Announcing this initiative, Rabbi Ellenson said, “It is in this spirit of ecumenicism, reconciliation, and hope — and with the conviction that both our Catholic and Jewish traditions require that we do the work of the Divine in this world — that an exciting and unprecedented partnership between this great Catholic university and this venerable Jewish seminary has been created.”

Phase I of the collaboration allows HUC faculty to provide courses in Jewish Studies at Xavier in such areas of Bible, Theology, Jewish History, Jewish Literature, Jewish Thought and Contemporary Jewish Studies. These courses, in addition to the courses in Jewish Studies already offered by Xavier faculty, will enable XU to create a minor in Jewish Studies, which will give XU the largest and most comprehensive Jewish Studies programs of any Catholic university in the world, according to Sable.

Phase II of the program will bring XU faculty to HUC to participate in both the rabbinical and graduate schools, and enable HUC students to enroll in select professional programs (Education, Business Administration) at XU.

“When completed, this new joint venture, combined with other collaborative academic efforts and world-renowned HUC resources such as the Klau Library and the Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, will position our city of Cincinnati as home to one of the most prestigious and competitive centers of Jewish and Interfaith Studies in the country,” Sable commented.

An inaugural gift of $750,000 toward this unique initiative was announced on Sept. 4, when Thomas G. Cody, Macy’s divisional vice chair, James A. Miller, chairman and senior portfolio manager, Bartlett & Co., serves as corporate council chair. Dinner co-chairs are Jerry and Suzanne Teller and Patty and Lewis Beck.